(c) An annual grant of Rs. 2 lakhs is given to Centre for Advanced Studies of India at the University of Pennsylvania (CASI), USA. The objective is to link American and Indian academics, professional and policy maker for potential scholarly, economic, technological and political co-operation. The grant is meant to be a token of our appreciation of the Centre's contribution towards generating better awareness of India in the United States.

The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), New Delhi received a grant of Rs. 1,34,36,000/-. The ICWA premises are being used to hold important seminars and conferences on subjects that are of interest and relevance to our foreign policy.

A grant of Rs. 13 lakhs has been provided to the Institute of Chinese Studies in Delhi University to encourage scholarship on China to enable dealing, in an educated and effective manner, with the rapidly changing and growing China, our largest neighbour.

Indian Passports to Afghani Refugees

3036. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that several Afghan nationals living in India as refugees have managed to procure Indian Passports in connivance with an Assistant Regional Passport Officer;

(b) if so, the number of such cases came to light so far; and

(c) the action taken by Government to investigate the matter thoroughly and to check such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Since the middle of 1999, 65 cases of passports issued to Afghan refugees living in India have been detected. The matter was looked into. No evidence of connivance of an Assistant Passport Officer has come to light.

(c) All 65 passports were issued by the Regional Passport Office, Delhi on the basis of clear police reports or verification certificates issued by officers of the rank of Deputy Secretary and above to the Government of India. Passports in all cases have been revoked. The police authorities

have taken appropriate action against the Government officials who provided the clear verification reports/certificates.

Recent meeting between India and China

3037. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and China recently held a meeting to view out deference on Indo-China border on the western sectors of the line of control;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the talks yield any results with regard to the border issues and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) The 14th meeting of the India-China Joint Working Group (JWG) on the Boundary Question was held in New Delhi on 21st November, 2002. The Indian delegation, which comprised of representatives of the Ministries of External Affairs, Home and Defence, was led by the Foreign Secretary. The Chinese delegation was led by Vice Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

(c) and (d) The discussions were held in a positive and forward looking manner. Both sides reviewed the ongoing process of LAC clarification. They also continue discussions on further Confidence Building Measures. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Expert Group (EG-14), which is a sub group of the JWG, would be held in Beijing in January, 2003.

A detailed review of bilateral relations since JWG-13, which was held on 31st July, 2001, was undertaken. Chinese side welcomed the forthcoming visit of Hon'ble Speaker to China in early January, 2003. This is a return visit for the visit of Mr. Li Peng, Chairman of the National People's Congress of China to India in January, 2001. Both sides agreed, *inter alia*, on the need to substantially enhance trade and economic relations, cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

Both sides also reviewed the functioning of the existing dialogue mechanisms such as on counter terrorism and security. The usefulness